

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

October 7, 2009

The Honorable J. Randolph Babbitt, Administrator
U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Aviation Administration
800 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20591

Dear Administrator Babbitt:

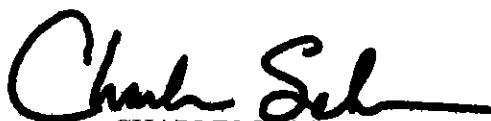
I would like to bring to your attention an issue of significant importance relating to economic development efforts at the former Griffiss Air Force Base, located in Rome, NY. Griffiss Air Force Base was realigned following the completion of the 1993 and 1995 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commissions, which resulted in the loss of nearly 5,000 military and civilian jobs. Since that time, local economic development officials have been working diligently to develop the former base into what is now the Griffiss Business and Technology Park. In addition, Oneida County has moved its county airport operations from nearby Whitestown (UCA) to Griffiss International Airport (RME), and undertaken a number of capital improvement projects in order to attract additional commercial tenants and customers to RME. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and various branches of the military have also played significant roles in the redevelopment effort.

Since 2008, Oneida County has contracted its Fixed Base Operations at RME to Freeman Holdings of NY LLC, which operates a Million Air franchise servicing general aviation customers at the airport. Freeman's business plan is structured around fuel sales to U.S. Military troop charters. This model has proven successful in other locations and RME offers the first opportunity to implement it in the northeast. The company has recently been awarded the DOD Military fuel contract at Griffiss through 2012. However, for this initiative to move forward, the County must complete construction of an Airport Terminal Building in 2010 and construction of additional fuel storage and service facilities as soon as possible.

Both of these capital projects are currently being reviewed by the FAA New York Airports District Office (NYDAO). Oneida County has invested considerable resources in both of these time sensitive projects. I respectfully request that NYDAO give priority to and expedite review of these two important capital improvement projects at Griffiss International Airport.

I am hopeful that the NYDAO will continue to work together in a cooperative manner with Oneida County so that these important projects can move forward without further delay. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this request, please have the appropriate members of your staff contact Mr. Chris Wilcox in my office at 202-225-3665. I appreciate your prompt attention to and consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,



CHARLES E. SCHUMER
United States Senator



MICHAEL A. ARCURI
Member of Congress